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CITY NEWS

The new perspective on city living

Vol. 19 No. 49

November 20 - November 26, 2002

Rutgers-Newark gives new president a hearty welcome

NEWARK — The 19th president of Rutgers came to Newark recently to outline his vision for the three State University of New Jersey campuses. It was an all around love fest between the former Rutgers assistant professor who was celebrating his return home, and staff, students and faculty who are eager to have a problem-solving leader who has an open mind and a listening ear.

"In Dick McCormick, we have an individual of national stature and accomplishment who is ready to engage Rutgers' community of students, faculty, staff and alumni. He is a capable leader who will be a powerful voice for higher education not only on campus, but at the state and national levels as well. He was simply the outstanding choice in a field of many excellent candidates, and I'm confident that Dr.

McCormick will generate confidence in the ability of this great state university to fulfill its mission and goals," Gene O'Hara, chair of the Board of Governors said when he announced their unanimous selection of Dr. McCormick to replace Francis L. Lawrence.

"It's wonderful to be home," Dr. McCormick told the overflow audience who gathered in the atrium of the Center for Law and Justice building on the Newark campus, "I cherish this more than I can explain. I do not intend to let you down."

"As your new president, I take tremendous pride in you," Dr. McCormick said. "I am truly honored to have been selected as president of Rutgers," said McCormick. "The excellence of this university is known throughout the world. I look forward to working closely with the university



CN photo by Scherly Gant

Professor Io-Aurelia Duncan greets Dr. Richard McCormick

community and the state's leaders so that together we may take Rutgers to even higher levels of achievement and service to the people of New Jersey."

His statement was a wel-

comed word of encouragement to a staff, student and faculty body that is struggling with the prospect of losing its autonomy due to a proposal by Governor James E. McGreevey

to merge Rutgers, the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and the New Jersey Institute of Technology, the state's three research universities.

"I came here to day to congratulate him," said Io-Aurelia Duncan, an African American adjunct instructor in the evening division. "I wanted to make sure I could look at him eyeball to eyeball. There is a tendency to ignore minorities unless faculty members insure that the leadership is aware that the faculty is paying full attention to what they do."

Duncan introduced herself to Dr. McCormick at the end of the program and they shook hands. During a brief conversation Dr. McCormick ensured her that the evening students were an important component of the university and they

See RUTGERS, Page 7

Labor, religious coalition rally 1,800 to meet with key politicians

NEWARK — The Jubilee Interfaith Organization (JIO) of Northern New Jersey held its first public meeting last Thursday in Newark. The turnout was phenomenal.

The grassroots participants — immigrants, labor union members, church parishioners workers and their leadership — came by the bus load. Some came in cars, others walked. They filled packed Sacred Heart Church on Sanford Avenue in Newark. There was standing room only. They were more than 1,800 strong, and equally determined.

The invited guests, which included more than a dozen local elected officials, including Mayors Sharpe James of Newark, Robert Bowser of East Orange, and Wayne Smith of Irvington, (Mayor Glenn Cunningham of Jersey City sent a representative); and several members of the Paterson City Council; newly elected Hudson County Executive Tom DeGise and Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo, and state Assembly representatives. Joseph Charles of Hudson County; Sharpe James of Essex County; Upendra J. Chivukula of Somerset County, and Loretta Weinberg of a higher style.

"Any time you get a tapes-



Photo courtesy of Ed Herman, Umoja Photography

Hudson County executive Tom DeGise and State Assemblywoman Loretta Weinberg at the rally.

try of people like this out on a Thursday evening it is phenomenal," Mayor James said. James says the City of Newark supports the goals of the JIO, which he summed up as "... jobs with benefits to all our res-

idents, college education for children of immigrants and equitable distribution of aid, planning and investment to ensure the support of our cities."

James was among the group

of persons that the organizers described as "key decision makers". The lawmakers had a front row seat because they were the target of the agenda for the evening.

The rally which defined the

broad agenda for the evening as metropolitan equity, worker justice and immigrant rights, was reminiscent of the earlier civil rights and labor rallies. As working class African American, Haitian American, Latino American and Indian American ethnicity filled the room, the Blessed Sacrament-St. Charles Choir rendered several gospel selections.

After the welcome and opening prayer, the Reverend David Thornton, president of the Jubilee Interfaith Organization gave a rousing statement of the purpose of the meeting.

"We will no longer be divided because of our color, or nationality, our language," Rev. Thornton said pounding the podium and rallying the audience who responded with cheers, hand claps, chants and banner waving. Thornton described the group as being formed to fight against racial segregation, a shortage of affordable housing, mistreatment of immigrants, and poor planning on a state wide regional level. "These are the core issues, of the core communities, and we are committed to the core," Thornton said.

Rev. who is also the pastor of United Presbyterian Church,

See JUBILATION, Page 7

Curious? Observer



Paycheck increase for workers — NJ Transit workers show off their increase paychecks thanks to a negotiation by local union contract, SEIU 32BJ's with Laro Buildings Services, NJ Transit building service contractor.

Supporters of the plan claim that bill collectors could get that money to the Treasury more efficiently than Uncle Sam. But opponents say that giving private firms access to taxpayers' financial data could put privacy at risk. What do you think? Log on to <http://www.vote.com> to tell the government if the IRS should hire private debt collection agencies — or if you think this would be a bad idea.

A prominent New York City radio host recently told people to show their love for Jam Master Jay by wearing their Adidas sneakers today. Doves of supporters complied, some even purchased new Adidas with the black stripes, to show solidarity to the slain rapper, his family and Run-DMC. Would it not have been better for the station to encourage fans to ask Adidas to establish a scholarship for Jam Master Jay's three children?

Jersey City Mayor Glenn D. Cunningham proved himself a class act by attending Friday's inauguration of Hudson County Executive Tom DeGise, whom Cunningham vociferously opposed for the position based on DeGise's flagrantly racist tactics during when he opposed Cunningham in the run off race for mayor of Jersey City. Cunningham, whose fights as mayor have pitted him against all the other mayors in Hudson County and Congressman Robert Menendez, has received the type of criticism heaped upon African Americans receive when the main stream thinks they "are not staying in their place", but he has guts and style.

Gary B. Taffet, Gov. James E. McGreevey's top cabinet member says he will quit after one year as chief of staff, and leave to "refocus" his priorities and spend more time with his family. The two have known each other for 15 years, but it seems the heat in the Governor's kitchen was a little too much for Taffet.

And now a documentary on O.J. Simpson; the only black man in America to be accused of murdering a Caucasian, tried in court and *found not guilty*. And there in lies the obsessive fixation on Mr. Simpson ... years later.

Everyone who is angered because they suspect the Simpson case represents a miscarriage of justice, should support the work of the Innocence Project which has sifted through DNA evidence and proven that 115 inmates were accused, tried and *wrongly convicted* by the criminal justice system.

Do you have an observation you want to share?

Send it to: **Curious Observer**
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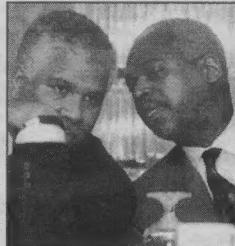
Group says election results threaten civil rights movement gains

WASHINGTON — Declaring that the outcome of the 2002 elections could pose grave threats to Americans' civil and constitutional rights, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) recently called for a new activism to preserve the progress achieved over the last 50 years.

"With Congress now in the hands of far right ideologues, there is little that stands in the way of the White House's goal of packing the federal courts — an outcome which poses a serious and direct threat to civil and

constitutional rights and liberties," said LCCR Executive Director Wade Henderson.

Calling for a renewal of "principled social activism," Henderson stated, "we must sharply focus our energies, engage new allies, mobilize our constituencies, and fight to defend any further erosion in the progress that has been achieved over the last 50 years." Henderson said that the battle lines are very clear and that the fight is not about political parties, but about two drastically different visions of



Wade Henderson, (r) confers with Hilary Shelton, Director, Washington, D.C. Bureau, NAACP.

America. One is dedicated to

the protection of equal opportunity, individual rights, and fundamental freedoms. The other seeks to limit those rights and diminish those freedoms.

Continuing, Henderson said, "in our nation's history, the biggest strides that we have made toward achieving justice and equal opportunity in our society have come through principled social activism and litigation such as Brown v. Board of Education, and through a politically sensitized Congress, which believed in the ability of the federal govern-

ment to address equal opportunity and justice. As a result, Congress passed such landmark laws as the Civil Rights Acts; the Fair Housing Act; minimum wage legislation; the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act; the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Earned Income Tax Credit."

"We anticipate that many on the far right will use Congress and the courts to take away historic victories and push their regressive agenda," Henderson said, adding he was "preparing for the battle."

Briefs

CALTECH: NATION'S LOWEST NUMBER OF BLACK FRESHMEN

(NNPA) — The California Institute of Technology currently has the lowest percentage of black freshmen among the nation's top 25 universities, according to a new survey by the "Journal of Blacks in Higher Education" conducted five years after affirmative action was banned in the state's college admissions.

ATLANTA'S MORRIS BROWN COLLEGE FATE IN JEOPARDY

(NNPA) — Morris Brown College, a historically Black college founded by former slaves, is strapped with mounting financial debt and close to losing accreditation, which would force the 117-year-old institution to close. The fate of the college is being decided by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The institution's loss of accreditation would make its student body ineligible for federal aid.

FIRST WOMAN PRIME MINISTER DISMISSED OVER FERRY DEATHS

DAKAR, Senegal (GIN) — Idrissa Seck was named Senegal's new prime minister after the first woman to hold the post was dismissed in the wake of a ferry disaster that killed 1,200.

MINISTERS FOCUS ON FOOD CRISIS

MAPUTO, Mozambique (GIN) — European and southern African ministers recently met to examine Zimbabwe's food crisis which reportedly threatens thousands. Weather conditions have produced drought. More than 14 million people face severe food shortages in southern Africa.



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Editorial

Iraq: What will be the real cost of this war?

American and allied officials say that the Bush administration has initiated a series of diplomatic and military steps that must be completed before the United States could go to war in Iraq. The tasks include spelling out a strict criteria for Turkey and Israel to follow before Iraq can be attacked. Both nations have been asked to hold their fire in the situation. The Bush administration clearly wants to take the fight to Iraq.

President George W. Bush appears to be attempting to add credibility to the use of force against President Saddam Hussein. These measures are being pushed on a timetable that precedes the United Nations inspectors, just arriving in Iraq, actually make an assessment of the existence of weapons of mass destruction. Further more, the Bush administration's timetable seems to be based more on launching an attack before the next hot weather season in Iraq, than with giving the somewhat inexperienced team of U.N. inspectors an opportunity to make a reasoned, thorough assessment of what weaponry Mr. Hussein does or does not have. This is to say nothing about whether or not Mr. Hussein will use those weapons.

U.S. military officials estimate that 250,000 troops could be mobilized within 30 days if President Bush give the order to attack Iraq. That is a quarter of a million young American men and women who will probably be attacked with nerve gas, and debilitating, deadly chemicals. A senior defense official said last Friday that, "We're making preparations every day. I don't want to start saying exactly when we're at peak readiness, but it would be a terrible mistake for anyone to underestimate our ability to act if needed."

What is chilling about this apparent rush to war, is that our government seems to be ignoring the fact that "It would be a terrible mistake for anyone to underestimate" the results of our actions in this war against Iraq. The "terrible mistake" would be realized in probably the highest civilian and military body count America has ever experienced. We have already learned the hard way on September 11, 2001 that the Muslim terrorists living among us will take deliberate retribution against our citizenry and our national icons when they feel they have been wronged. The military and domestic body count, and those left maimed will be astronomical. Do we have a domestic readiness plan for that?

There will also be a tremendous financial cost of war as well. Already Turkey which has parlayed its geographical proximity to the situation into a multi-billion dollar military aid package. Iran is already seeking billion on assets frozen in American financial situations. These billions of dollars are needed in the national coffers at this time when the U.S. economy is stalled and corporations are still laying off in the thousands. We have experienced drastic budget cuts because the federal government has fewer dollars for social, environmental and educational programs.

Ironically if we go to war with Iraq for too many of those troops who return in body bags, or scarred for life will be from the very inner cities that are already financially and psychologically devastated. Are we ready for that cost?

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The Missing Black Electorate

By Ron Walters

In one dramatic night of election victories, the Republican party has taken over the entire government of the United States. This was the situation at the end of the debacle of the 2000 election, but Republicans could not capitalize on it after Jim Jeffords of Vermont switched from the Republican party to the Democrats in the Senate.

Now, Republicans are responsible for producing public policies that confront many of the most complex problems in the country. Much will be said about the influence of George Bush on the outcome, but his influence is not so much vested in him personally. The key to his influence was that Bush has become the personification of the fears of Americans about their own personal security, and the election results show that those fears trumped economic insecurity. So, the campaign strategy of Karl Rove, the White House political adviser, to "run on the war" was not followed, since few Republicans actually ran on war and peace issues. Nevertheless, the so-called "war against terrorism" was one of the hidden facets of this campaign, driving Americans' fears of their security and clinging to Bush to resolve them.

The other major factor that accounts for the Republican victories was the absence of the

If the Republicans mess up the complex issues of war and the economy for which they now have full responsibility, it sets up a good situation in 2004 for the Democrats.

base vote of the Democratic party. Losses by Democrats in Georgia, Maryland, Texas, North Carolina and other states indicate that the black vote, in particular, just did not turn out. The issues that blacks, Hispanics and other constituencies that have been more dependent upon government, have cared about were not front and center in the agenda of the Democratic party. And in states such as Maryland, there was some alienation among blacks that although the Republican candidate for governor picked a black running mate, Michael Steele, the Democratic candidate, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend did not. Undoubtedly, this depressed the black turnout in key areas of the state.

In Georgia, there may have been some residual fallout of the Cynthia McKinney race that caused many black voters to stay home, leading to the defeat

of Charles Walker, the black candidate in the 12th District. So, some local as well as national agenda issues may have been at play.

Finally, there is a confused leadership situation in the Democratic party, so that when one compares the clarity and force of the Republican message with what the Democrat had to offer, voters were not energized by the comparison. The Democrats used many individuals to convey their message, including the popular Bill Clinton. However, there were many Democratic parties with Richard Gephardt running for President, and putting forth a wimpy position on the war with Iraq and "me too" message on cutting taxes with respect to the economy that might have been proposed by a Republican. So voters could not see the clear distinction between the Republican message and leadership and Democrats.

The bright light in all of this is that with the Republicans now in charge, if they mess up the complex issues of war and the economy for which they now have full responsibility, it sets up a good situation in 2004 for Democrats.

Ron Walters is Distinguished Leadership Scholar, director of the African American Leadership Institute and professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland. His latest book is *African American Leadership*.

White Ghosts and Black Snipers

This is the first of a four part commentary on violence in America

By John Sankofa

There is a great deal of folly going around these days about what clearly constitutes our nation's single greatest public health threat-no, not Al-Qaeda, but guns and our American culture of violence.

Take the case of the two sniper-suspects, John Allen Muhammad, 41, and John Lee Malvo, 17, both recently accused of galvanizing the DC-area in a blue 1990 Chevrolet sedan while shooting victims with a Bushmaster .223-caliber semiautomatic rifle. The deadly three-week spree, which consumed the national media, left 10 people dead, including Ken Bridges, a reparations and black empowerment activist. Three other victims received life-threatening injuries, including a 13-year old black student from Prince George's Middle School in Maryland.

Beneath the surface of this scourge of random murder and public fight lies a much deeper story laden with classic American denial and more than a bit of racial mythology. For starters, it can hardly go unno-

Beneath the surface of this scourge of random murder and public fight lies a much deeper story laden with classic American denial and more than a bit of racial mythology.

ticed that within hours of the suspects' capture, the national media scrambled to interview Minister Louis Farrakhan, head of the Nation of Islam, because it was reported that John Muhammad was an NOI member and may have been part of the security contingent at the 1995 Million Man March. Had Muhammad been a Catholic, reporters would never have called the Vatican. There also was the dubious early suspicion, flaunted by the media and general public, that the suspects were somehow schooled in their violence by the notorious Al-Qaeda.

America, always looking for "the other" to blame, refuses to look in the mirror at a stark reality: Violence, in the words of H. Rap Brown, is "as American as apple pie." Of course, we need not look far for examples of how violence has locked onto American culture with tentacles that choke every aspect of our daily lives and extend brazenly into America's foreign and domestic affairs.

It is a cheerless story that U.S. foreign policy is widely revered not for diplomatic feats but for its drop-of-a-dime use of military force. The barrel of the big gun is where American leaders have traditionally looked to solve complex problems throughout the globe in countries such as Vietnam, Grenada, Somalia, Panama, Bosnia and Iraq.

Perhaps it is a telling irony that Muhammad, the chief sniper suspect, is a Gulf War army veteran whose assigned engineering unit rolled into Iraq at the vanguard of Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

John Sankofa is health writer who was awarded the 2002 Health Media Fellowship by the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Hotel levy bill clears first committee hurdle

Impreveduto/Diegnan/Tucker hotel levy bill would enable municipalities to offset local property taxes.

TRENTON — Property taxpayers would benefit greatly from legislation recently released by an Assembly panel that would give local municipalities the power to impose a room tax on hotels with more than 100 rooms.

The legislation (A-561), sponsored by Assemblymen Anthony Impreveduto, Patrick Diegnan, Jr., and Donald Tucker. The hotel room levy in the bill would be limited to two percent of the hotel rate.

"During the course of a year, this could add up to \$2 million in savings for Secaucus' local property owners," said Impreveduto (D-Hudson). Secaucus has 2,025 hotel rooms. Currently, two New Jersey cities - Newark and Jersey City - are permitted to impose a levy, which is capped at six percent of the hotel rate, on hotel rooms. Atlantic City also can tax hotel rooms, but that power is granted through a different law.

"Large hotels place a unique strain on a community's

infrastructure and services," said Diegnan (D-Middlesex). "Hotel guests depend on local police and firefighters and travel the roads maintained by tax-payers.

The Assemblymen said their bill would add roughly \$6 to a nightly hotel room bill in most communities. This charge, they said, would pale in comparison for what a guest would pay for a hotel room in nearby Manhattan.

"Hotels in northern New Jersey cater primarily to a corporate clientele," said Tucker (D-Essex). "The additional charge should not be considered burdensome or excessive."

Impreveduto said the bill would help property taxpayers in Weehawken and also could apply in several other communities in the state that have large-capacity hotels.

The Assembly Housing and Local Government Committee released the bill 5-1, and will go to the Assembly Appropriations Committee for further consideration.

Loan tool saves minority borrowers from predators

NEW YORK — Enabling consumers to do their homework before they shop for a mortgage, TrueLink, a leader in the field of consumer credit management tools, unveils KnowYourLoanRate.com, a service that brings an unprecedented level of transparency to the lending process. It is a unique online personal finance solution that allows consumers to use their own detailed credit histories and financial profiles to evaluate loan rates from the lender's perspective.

KnowYourLoanRate.com delivers a concrete answer to the question: What is the best mortgage rate I can get?

According to Fannie Mae, up to 50% of sub-prime borrowers could have qualified for lower-cost, conventional financing, saving them each an average of \$200,000 over the life of a 30-year loan. This situation is exacerbated in African-American communities, where a recent HUD/U.S.

Treasury report indicates that high-cost subprime loans are five times more common than in white neighborhoods. Prime borrowers often receive inefficient rates as well. Without realizing it, consumers are consistently paying higher loan rates than those they deserve.

KnowYourLoanRate.com

was created specifically to address this problem by providing consumers with the hard facts before they commit to a loan. The result is a powerful tool for ensuring that consumers receive the best loan rate.

"When it comes to the biggest purchase of our lives, we're going in blind. We are trusting mortgage brokers who may not necessarily have our best interests at heart or we are relying on rudimentary mortgage rate calculators," said Russell Schaub, CEO of TrueLink. "Less than half of African-American families own their own homes compared to almost three-quarters of Caucasians. (African Americans) encounter higher interest rates when doing so," Schaub said. "But now they can level the playing field. KnowYourLoanRate.com arms borrowers with the knowledge necessary to take control of the financial aspect of the biggest purchase of their lives."

KnowYourLoanRate.com features a tool that reflects how a change in credit score, income, home value or other factors will impact loan rates. For more information, visit www.truelink.com, www.knowyourloanrate.com, www.freecreditprofile.com.

'BLACKNJ' LAUNCHES ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

MONTCLAIR — A statewide network of African American residents, businesses, nonprofit and faith-based organizations recently introduced the BLACKNJ e-newsletter, the first weekly electronically distributed newsletter for and by New Jersey's black community.

More than 500 black professionals, entrepreneurs and community leaders were invited to attend the BLACKNJ Professional Mixer last week, to get a first hand introduction to what the founder called, "the highly anticipated email-based publication."

The celebration was held at the Serengeti Plains, a lifestyle art gallery in Montclair.

"The BLACKNJ e-newsletter was born from the need for a communication vehicle that could reach our statewide network on a frequent and consistent basis," said Joseph Campbell, president and founder of BLACK-NJ, which is based in Newark. The e-newsletter is free of charge to members of the organization.

"With the BLACKNJ e-newsletter, individuals, businesses and organizations now have a platform to communicate with New Jersey's black community," Campbell said.

The BLACKNJ e-newsletter will feature articles, profiles, and opinion polls based on current events. The e-publication will also offer printable coupons, and prize drawings. For more information visit, www.blacknj.com.

NJ to serve as anti-terrorism pilot

TRENTON — New Jersey will serve as a pilot program in which government and business work in partnership to plan and prepare public/private responses to terrorist attacks, Governor James E. McGreevey announced recently.

The program will provide New Jersey with a powerful resource to ensure the safety and security of our citizens," McGreevey said following a meeting with General Charles Boyd (USAF, Ret), President of Business Executives for National Security (BENS). BENS, a national, non-partisan organization of senior business leaders, has established a New

Jersey Business Force to develop and implement the pilot program.

McGreevey said the New Jersey Business Force has begun its work by identifying three areas which can be best handled through partnerships between the public and private sectors: Business Response Network, Business Volunteer Training, End-Use Distribution of the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile push packs.

"The New Jersey Business Force will implement three new programs each year," McGreevey said. "It will also manage all programs it has implemented in prior years."

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Don't self-diagnose: See a doctor first

NAPS — A nationwide survey of hundreds of African American women suggests that women's gynecological health is too often not given the priority it deserves.

Fortunately, by publicizing these concerns, African American leaders are hoping to change these statistics.

"Black women are the primary health care decision makers for the entire family and often delay seeing a doctor to care for their own health care needs, including gynecologic health," said Dr. Lorraine Cole, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Black Women's Health Project.

Women need to see a doctor when suspecting any type of vaginal infection. Only a doctor can give an accurate diagnosis right away, provide treatment



The National Black Women's Health Project is urging more women to avoid possible health risks by seeing their doctor for certain infections.

options and help prevent unnecessary and easily avoidable complications. The National Black Women's Health Project said.

The survey results, from close to 2000 women across the country, indicated that African American women reported more cases of vaginal yeast infections (65 percent) compared to other groups of women (Caucasian, 54 percent, and Hispanic, 53 percent). However, one third of African American women did not seek a doctor's care for proper diagnosis and treatment of this common condition. The survey showed that nearly one-third of these women self-medicated what they suspected was a vaginal yeast infection.

Self-diagnosis of infections

can be a serious health risk. Women can easily mis-diagnose themselves because yeast infections share similar symptoms with other types of infections, such as bacterial vaginosis and trichomoniasis. If left untreated, these problems may lead to long-term problems such as pelvic inflammatory disease, which can cause ectopic pregnancies or infertility.

A study published in *Obstetrics and Gynecology* found that two thirds of women who bought over the counter treatments had inaccurately self-diagnosed their condition.

"It is disturbing to realize that such a large percentage of women risk pelvic inflammatory disease and even infertility by self-diagnosing and, consequently, mis-diagnosing vaginal infections," Dr. Cole said. "With the launch of the national campaign to close the racial health gap, we hope to convey the importance of regular gynecologic visits, even when suspecting a vaginal yeast infection."

For more information regarding gynecological health, or the National Black Women's Health Project, visit <http://www.BlackWomensHealth.org>.

Health Briefs

Syphilis cases on the rise

The Center for Disease Control recently reported on the rise of syphilis in the United States for the first time in more than a decade, largely because of outbreaks among gay and bisexual men in several big cities. The CDC report followed government warnings earlier this year that gay and bisexual men may be letting down their guard against sexually transmitted diseases. The syphilis rate increased from 2.1 cases per 100,000 people in 2000 to 2.2 cases per 100,000 last year, the CDC said. The rate had been dropping every year since 1990, and the 2000 rate was the lowest since 1941, when nationwide reporting of the disease began. Syphilis among women actually dropped 17.6 percent in 2001.

More than two-thirds of the new syphilis patients were men. Since 1997, syphilis outbreaks have erupted in New York City, Seattle, Chicago, San Francisco and Miami.

Officials said the problems include a new generation that does not remember the devastation of the AIDS epidemic, lack of concern because of life-extending AIDS-treatment drugs, and burnout after years of good-health messages and safe-sex practices.

Better alternative to filling prescription drugs

Before seniors had one choice - if they couldn't afford their prescriptions they had to drive endless hours to Canada. Now they can save money and time, by ordering their prescriptions over the internet. The senior focus website, www.SeniorDrugs.org offers free access to regularly updated international price lists for the 120 most popular brand name prescription drugs, as well as more than 1,300 generic medicines.

Seniors are able to fill their prescriptions from the comfort of their homes. In order to do so, visit Senior Drugs at www.senior-drugs.org for ordering information.

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Jubilation labor, church coalition gets NJ politicians' oath to plan better cities and advance worker and immigrant justice

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Photo courtesy of Ed Herman, Umogo Photography Newark Mayor Sharpe James says he supports JIO's goals.

Newark Mayor Sharpe James says he supports JIO's goals. In Paterson said, "This meeting is an essential step in tackling the most pressing social and economic needs of the region."

The JIO is a new phenomenon in the public arena. It unites faith-based congregations, urban and suburban, and labor unions, crossing racial and economic lines.

Cate Poe, the state representative of the AFL-CIO and a member of the JIO said the group "is about congregations and unions connecting." In the past, Poe told the rally participants, people in their community remained isolated in their town believing that the people in the town next door was the root of their problems." This type of divisive thinking has led to an increase in problems that have gone unattended, Poe said as she challenged the group to remain committed to a plan of common problem solving.

During the Jubilee member roll call, representatives from nearly 50 churches and labor unions displayed their banners in a demonstration of strength.

"When a union want a public show of strength upon which negotiators can build, we pack a hearing, organize a rally, put GOTV volunteer in the field, or demonstration support through a workplace election or action. When congregations want to be taken seriously, they organize a public meeting," on of the JIO organizers said. The Northern New Jersey members grew out of an initiative in Jersey City. The JIO was formed in 2000 and officially came into existence in February 2001.

In what the JIO call a "tightly timed and structured event" that presented "no surprises, and no ambushes for anyone," JIO leaders moved smoothly through their platform issues.

Clauvise St. Hilaire of St. Patrick's Catholic Church in, who spoke on behalf of legislation that "qualifies undocu-

mented graduates of New Jersey High Schools for in state tuition," told the audience that he did not feel respected in America until he went to college. After several JIO speakers addressed the issue, state representatives Upendra and Charles were asked to come forward and take an oath that they will work to get this legislation passed in New Jersey. Similar laws which make undocumented students eligible for student loans, Pell Grants, and in-state-tuition rates, have been acted in Texas, California, Utah, and New York, according to members of the JIO.

The speakers on behalf of worker justice included Liz Perry of the Laborer's Eastern Region Organizing Fund, and Kathleen Rawlings a member of SEIU 1199. The JIO worker justice platform included calling on Hudson County Freeholders and County Executive DeGise to "expand the number of workers covered" by the existing living wage ordinances. Perry was part of a group that met earlier in the year with DeGise and the other politicians to secure their private and public commitment to the JIO platform.

The JIO also asked that public funded construction projects be open to women and minority and that those two groups be given "access to building trades careers." Perry, a single parent, told the audience that becoming a member of the labor union changed her life. The organizers called "on the Mayor and City Council of Paterson to work with Jubilee, ACORN and local building trades unions to pass this kind of innovative ordinance for the city of Paterson." As four of five members of the Paterson City Council promised to introduce legislation as early as Monday, members of the audience changed "the people unit-

ed" to "the people united" and that "the people united will never be defeated."

Constance Latham of Old Bergen Church and the Rev. Geoff Curtiss of All Saints Episcopal Church, said JIO will seek a team approach to "address the issues of sprawl, race and concentrated poverty.

The group called for "metropolitan equity" so that communities like those in Essex and Hudson County will have equity with communities like Wayne. Their vision included a fairer distribution of resources and reinvestment in developed areas. The JIO includes members from Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic and Union Counties, and is an affiliate of the Gamaliel Foundation. For more information about the Jubilee Interfaith Organization visit their web site at www.jubileeinterfaith.org, or call Cathy Schap, at 201-892-7477.



Photo courtesy of Ed Herman, Umogo Photography

Paterson City Council members pledge to support worker issues.

Rutgers welcomes new prez

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



CN photo by Scherif Gant

Banner welcoming Dr. Richard McCormick seen hanging over the atrium of the law center

shook hands. During a brief conversation Dr. McCormick ensured Duncan that the evening students were an important component of the university and they would not be forgotten.

Dr. McCormick complimented Governor McGreevey for placing "higher education at the top of his agenda," during his remarks to students, but later issued a statement on the merger that said:

"We must have widespread discussion among the university community - the governing boards, faculty, students, staff and more than 300,000 alumni - before we can move forward and fully embrace the recommendations."

The Governor has said he may invite McCormick to sit on the task force that will draft strategies for the merger.

Governor McGreevey announced a press availability for Monday as *City News* was going to press. The announcement said the governor, along with former New Jersey governors Brendan

Byrne and Thomas Kean, along with Dr. P. Roy Vagelos would be present and the availability was regarding the report by the Commission on Health, Science, Education and Training that was released last month and recommended the restructuring of Rutgers, New Jersey Institute of Technology and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey into a single, research university system with three distinct, autonomous university campuses in North, Central and South Jersey.

The mid October Commission report also called for: a Newark/North Jersey university, incorporating Rutgers-Newark, NJIT and UMDNJ's Newark facilities, including University Hospital; a central New Jersey university incorporating Rutgers and UMDNJ facilities located in New Brunswick and Piscataway; and a South Jersey university that includes the Rutgers Camden campus and the UMDNJ Stratford campus.

Dr. McCormick returns to

New Jersey from the University of Washington where he served as president since 1995. He began his teaching career at Rutgers as an assistant professor in 1976 and was promoted to associate professor in 1981 and to professor in 1985.

Born in New Brunswick, New Jersey and a graduate of Piscataway high school, Dr. McCormick, 54, is the son of Richard P. McCormick, a prominent history professor whose distinguished career at Rutgers University spans decades. The McCormick residence hall located on the Busch campus is named in honor of Richard P. McCormick.

"I'm a loyal New Jersey son who grew up along the banks and within the culture and communities of the state's flagship public research university," Dr. McCormick said. "I love Rutgers and I am honored that my family and I have been a part of its long and distinguished tradition of excellence. I look forward to coming home." He is due to take over the position on November 30.

Book review

Zora Neale Hurston: A life in Letters

Collected and edited by Carla Kaplan

"This is a wonderful addition to what we need to understand about a spirited, extraordinary life."

— Alice Walker



Zora Neale Hurston: A Life in Letters is a landmark collection of more than 500 letters by the doyenne of American letters, Zora Neale Hurston.

Published here for the first time and edited by leading Hurston scholar Dr. Carla Kaplan (with a foreword by Robert Hemenway) this unique compilation offers an intimate portrait of one of the most fascinating figures of the African American literary tradition.

Through letters to Harlem Renaissance friends and cultural figures Langston Hughes, Alain Locke, Countee Cullen, and Carl Van Vechten, among many others, readers will experience the exuberance and vicissitudes of

Hurston's life. Kaplan has devoted over 100 pages to biographical analysis and has included a chronology and glossary of Hurston's many correspondents and friends, making this not merely a collection of letters but a comprehensive introduction to an important American writer.

In her introduction, Kaplan suggests that these deeply personal letters "give us the Harlem Renaissance, almost for the first time, through a black woman's eyes, the eyes of a woman who helped inaugurate yet also stood outside of one of the most exciting literary flowerings of this country."

Spanning four decades, these letters offer heartrending insights into her life, and illuminate her contributions to a variety of pivotal moments in history including the Harlem Renaissance, the Great Depression, and the rise of anthropology and early black feminism. Her letters to her patron, Mrs. Charlotte "Godmother" Osgood Mason, are laced with equal amounts of cynicism and reverence. ("I know that this is distressing to you, the mother of the primitives, but it is the unlovable fact ... I am on fire about my people. I need not concern myself with the few individuals who have quit the race via the tea table.")

In Kaplan's own words, these letters showcase Hurston as "writer, anthropologist, dramatist, teacher, celebrity, folklorist, and urbanite. They also reveal her less public persona: Hurston as wife, lover, sister, aunt, friend, entrepreneur, recluse, sailor, pet lover, gardener, and cook. Hurston was famously Janus-faced and often startlingly even brutally honest."

Painstakingly annotated and meticulously edited, this collection will provide for fans, as well as those discovering

Hurston for the first time, a penetrating and profound portrait of the life, writings, and impressive imagination of one of the most enigmatic literary figures of the twentieth century.

Carla Kaplan is a professor of English at the University of Southern California and a noted Hurston scholar. She is the author of *The Erotics of Talk, Women's Writing and Feminist Paradigms*, and editor of the recently published *Every Tongue Got to Confess: Negro Folk Tales from the Gulf States*. She lives in Los Angeles, California.



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Die Another Day

James Bond returns with the twentieth installment in the superspy series of adventures. From Hong Kong to Cuba to London, Bond circles the world in his quest to unmask a traitor and prevent a catastrophic war. On his way, he crosses paths with Jinx (Berry) and Miranda Frost (Pike), who will play vital roles in the adventure.

Rated PG-13

The Emperor's Club

Based on the short story "The Palace Thief" by Ethan Canin, Kevin Kline stars as William Hundert, a passionate and principled Classics professor who finds his tightly-controlled world shaken and inexorably altered when



a new student, Sedgewick Bell (Emile Hirsch), walks into his classroom.

What begins as a fierce battle of wills gives way to a close student-teacher relationship, but results in a life lesson for Hundert that will still haunt him a quarter of a century later.

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Friday after next

The third installment in the successful Friday series, Friday After Next takes place



E BRIEFS

Entertainment

— Kim Bowman

Is Halle Berry having second marriage problems?



During a recent interview with *Essence Magazine*, the beautiful Halle Berry admits that she was going through a "staggering crisis" in her personal life, while receiving her greatest career accolade. Berry also admitted to going to therapy sessions with her husband, singer Eric Benet. "The truth is that during the period of my most significant public success — the Academy Awards — my private life faced a staggering crisis. All romantic relationships suffer crisis; no woman can claim otherwise," Berry told *Essence*.

Movie

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during the Christmas season back in the old neighborhood where it all began. Although cousins Craig (Ice Cube) and Day-Day (Mike Epps) have left behind



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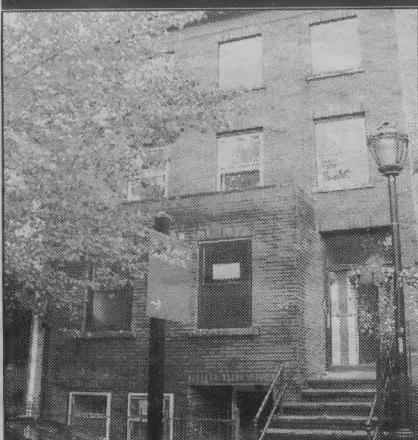
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Calendar

Community

Community movie day "Bargain Tuesdays" at Newark's Screens: On Springfield Ave. See two movies for the price of one. 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. tickets (adults for children), \$4.00, 6:00 p.m. till closing two adults, \$7.00 and two children's tickets, \$4.00. For more info call 973-642-5555 or 973-642-4708.

In celebration of Fire Prevention month, fire officials and firefighters and experts will be on-hand to deliver fire safety and prevention tips to residents. For more info call 973-733-7446.

Woodbridge — The Barron Arts Center is looking for volunteers to help with light office duties and greeting visitors. For more info call 732-634-0413 weekdays between 9:00 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19 - 22

Atlantic City — 87th Annual New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference (NJSLM) will be held at Atlantic City Convention Center. Mayor Chris Bollwage of Elizabeth is slated to become president of the NJSLM during this year's conference.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

New Brunswick — The New Jersey State Bar Foundation will present a free public seminar on social security from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. For more info call 1-800-FREE-LAW.

Newark — This holiday season you are invited to donate canned and non-perishable foods for local families. Drop off location is St. James AME Church, 604 Dr. MLK Blvd.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20 - 24

Continental Airlines Arena presents Disney on Ice Princess Classics. For ticket info call 201-507-8900.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22

Montclair — New York Times columnist Debra Galant will speak to the Northern New Jersey Professional Chapter of the Association for Women in Communication (AWC) at Montclair Art Museum. A continental breakfast begins at 8:30 a.m. followed by a 9:00 a.m. presentation. For more info call 973-746-5555.

Newark — This holiday season you are invited to donate canned and non-perishable foods for local families. Drop off location is the fire station on Lafayette and Mulberry St.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Clifton — Make-A-Wish Foundation is hosting its 2nd Annual Wish Upon A Star luncheon and entertainment

memorabilia auction. For more info call 973-616-1802.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Plainfield — The American Red Cross, Tri-County Chapter is seeking your help in providing Thanksgiving meals for people in need in our area. Food donations are being accepted at the American Red Cross, at 332 West Front St. after 8:00 a.m. For more info call 908-756-6414.

Somerset — Somerset County Chamber Of Commerce will host their 6th annual Culinary Invitational at The Double Tree Hotel from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. For more info call 908-725-1552.

Business

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19 - 22

Atlantic City — The NJ State League of Municipalities hosts its 87th Annual Conference: The Keys to Success. For info call 609-695-3481, ext. 15.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22

Jersey City — New Jersey City University will host a public forum to discuss the key objectives stakeholders should pursue over the next several years. Forum will be held in Hepburn Hall, Rm 202.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Garwood — New Jersey Chamber will host a fundraiser "Fashion for Life" for the new Plainfield chapter of Newborns in Need, a non-profit charity that donates baby items to hospitals, homeless shelters, etc. For more info call 908-490-1445.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2

Newark — NJIT will host a public forum to discuss the key objectives stakeholders should pursue over the next several years. Forum will be held in Hazell Center Ballroom.

Heartbeat

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Irvington — The public is invited to participate in Diabetes Jeopardy! A fun way to learn about a serious disease. Free Blood Glucose Testing will be available. 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. first floor, Dayroom, Irvington General Hospital, 832 Chancellor Avenue. For more info call Senior Services at 973-399-8033.

Summit — Spence Chapin will host a workshop for adoptive parents at Calvary Episcopal Church, 31 Woodland Ave at 7:30 p.m. For more info call 908-233-2493.



November 29, 30, Dec. 1 — New Jersey Performing Arts Center presents "Home" a Tony nominated play by Samm-Art Williams. This eloquent drama depicts three decades in the life of an African-American farmer — from the countryside of North Carolina to the temptations of the big city and back home again. For more info visit, <http://www.njpac.org>.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

Irvington — Relax and Be Fit. Join our ongoing dance and relaxation group Newcomers always welcome. 10:00 11:00 a.m. first floor, Classroom B, Irvington General Hospital, 832 Chancellor Avenue. For more info call Senior Services at 973-399-8033.

Irvington — People with Arthritis Can Exercise 1:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. first floor, Dayroom, Irvington General Hospital, 832 Chancellor Avenue. For more info call Senior Services at 973-399-8033.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24

South Orange — The Blood Center of New Jersey is looking for donors at Congregation Beth El, 222 Irvington Ave from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Union — The Blood Center of New Jersey is looking for donors at Knights of Columbus, 1034 Jeanette Ave from 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Irvington — Join the Health Ambassadors, a group of community volunteers who spread the word about diabetes. 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., first floor, Classroom B, Irvington General Hospital, 832 Chancellor Avenue. For more info call Senior Services at 973-399-8033.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26

Irvington — Crochet Club, 10:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m., first floor, Dayroom, Irvington General Hospital, 832 Chancellor Avenue. For more info call Senior Services at 973-399-8033.

Irvington — People with Arthritis Can Exercise 1:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. first floor, Dayroom, Irvington General Hospital, 832 Chancellor Avenue. For more info call Senior Services at 973-399-8033.

973-624-1584.

NOVEMBER 22, 23, 24

Newark — NJPAC presents the Urban Bush Women and National Song & Dance Company of Mozambique at 7:30 p.m. For more info call 1-888-GO-NJPAC.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Newark — Newark School of Arts Dance Academy will host a master class with renowned choreographer Louis Johnson fro 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. For more info call 973-642-0133.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Newark — African Globe Studios will host House of Poetry Teen open mic night. For more info call 973-624-1584.

Jersey City — Jersey City NAACP chapter will host its 83rd Annual Freedom Fund Banquet at 5:00 p.m. at the Newark Airport Marriott. For more info call 201-434-5615.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Newark — The Newark Public Library presents a film discussion of Richard Wright's Black Boy from 10:00 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. For more info call 973-733-3610.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27

Newark — NJPAC presents India.Arie in concert in support of her new CD "Voyage to India".

Newark — The Bridge Club, 343 Washington St. will present an evening of poetry & music hosted by Ras Baraka and Juba Dowdell from 7:00 p.m. until. For more info call 973-495-0757.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10

Newark — NJPAC presents "The Colors of Christmas" with Oleta Adams, Peabo Bryson, Jon Secada and Jody Watley. Each artist will perform some of their greatest hits. For info call 1-888-GO-NJPAC.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

Newark — NJPAC presents "The Snow Queen" featuring Hudson Vagabond Puppets at 2:00 p.m. Ages 9 & up in the Victoria Theater. For more info call 1-888-GO-NJPAC.

Mail your calendar events and photographs at least two weeks in advance to:

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